



LOWELL SCHOOL COMMITTEE

REGULAR MEETING MINUTES

Date:	October 19, 2022
Time:	6:30PM
Location:	City Council Chamber, 375 Merrimack Street, 2nd Floor, Lowell, MA 01852

Members of the public may view the meeting via LTC and those wishing to speak regarding a specific agenda item shall register to speak in advance of the meeting by sending an email to the Superintendent indicating the agenda item, a phone number and email address so we can provide a zoom link to access the meeting. Email address is mpalazzo@lowell.k12.ma.us. If no access to email you may contact us at 978-674-4324. All requests must be submitted before 2:00 p.m. on the day of the meeting.

1. SALUTE TO FLAG

2. ROLL CALL

On a roll call at 6:38 p.m., members present were, namely: Ms. Delrossi, Ms. Doherty, Ms. Martin, Ms. Thompson, Mayor Chau and Ms. Chhoun. Mr. Lay arrived at 6:58 p.m.

3. SPECIAL ORDER OF BUSINESS

4. MINUTES

4.1. Approval of the Minutes of the Special Meeting of the Lowell School Committee Meeting of Wednesday, October 5, 2022

Ms. Martin made a motion to accept and place on file the minutes of the Special and the Regularly Scheduled School Committee Meetings that were held on Wednesday, October 5, 2022; seconded by Ms. Thompson. 6 yeas, 1 absent (Mr. Lay) APPROVED

4.2. Approval of the Minutes of the Regularly Scheduled School Committee Meeting of Wednesday, October 5, 2022

Ms. Martin made a motion to accept and place on file the minutes of the Special and the Regularly Scheduled School Committee Meetings that were held on Wednesday, October 5, 2022; seconded by Ms. Thompson. 6 yeas, 1 absent (Mr. Lay) APPROVED



5. PERMISSION TO ENTER

5.1. Permission to Enter: October 19, 2022

Superintendent Boyd informed the Committee that was an error and IDEAS contract is for \$8,460 and not \$6,120 as it appeared on the Permission to Enter.

Ms. Martin made a motion to approve the Permission to Enter and requested more information on Kathrine Carey and Alexandra Grant before their contracts are signed by the Committee: seconded by Ms. Delrossi. 6 yeas, 1 absent (Mr. Lay) APPROVED

6. MEMORIALS

6.1. Michael Cappotto, Morey School Building Service Employee

6.2. Mary Geoffroy, Lowell High School Clerk Scheduler, Aunt of Freshman Academy Social Worker Gina Martel, Cousin of Adult Education Director Elizabeth McKiernan, Cousin of Greenhalge School Teacher Kathleen Ramirez, and Cousin of Former Mayor and Current City Councilor John Leahy.

7. MOTIONS

7.1. [By Eileen DelRossi]: Request the Superintendent report on the quantity of fights causing physical harm to students at the high school.

The Committee asked for more information around the process and procedures in place and well as how parents are notified.

Ms. Delrossi made a motion to approve; seconded by Ms. Thompson. 6 yeas, 1 absent (Mr. Lay) APPROVED

7.2. [By Eileen DelRossi]: Request the Superintendent report on the differentiation of grade levels of special education clerks throughout the district.

Ms. Delrossi made a motion to approve; seconded by Ms. Chhoun. 6 yeas, 1 absent (Mr. Lay) APPROVED

7.3. [By Stacey Thompson]: Request for the current methodology for retrieving incremental and ongoing knowledge/feedback regarding employment satisfaction or suggestions from all district employees, to be used as a strategic tool for this committee to consider potential trainings, supports and to share with HR to utilize with their hiring process.

Ms. Doherty made a friendly amendment with no objection from the maker of the motion to include quarterly reports on types of complaints and nature of the investigations without employee names and any lawsuits, claim letters and MCAD filings.

Ms. Thompson made a motion to approve; seconded by Ms. Martin. 7 yeas APPROVED



7.4. [By Stacey Thompson]: Request for an update on work, changes, policy updates or remedies surrounding compensation and position classification disparities and additional equity issues be brought to light in the 2018 HR audit.

A friendly amendment was made with no objection from the maker of the motion to send this to a Joint Human Resources & Labor Relations and Equity & Access Subcommittee meeting to discuss this in conjunction with the districts upcoming Human Resources audit.

Ms. Martin stated that there is a Human Resources & Labor Relations meeting scheduled for Wednesday, October 26, 2022 and she has no objection to it being a joint meeting.

Ms. Thompson made a motion to approve; seconded by Ms. Doherty. 7 yeas APPROVED

7.5. [By Stacey Thompson]: Motion to obtain full scope of Chief Equity Officer involvement in the employment process to ensure an equity lens is attached to the design of job descriptions and central in hiring choices/decisions, as well as the disbursement of talent district-wide.

Ms. Thompson made a motion to approve; seconded by Mr. Lay. 7 yeas APPROVED

7.6. [By Jackie Doherty]: Request the Superintendent provide the committee with a report on what each elementary school offers students re programming, interventions, and supports to address learning loss in literacy and math due to the pandemic.

Ms. Doherty made a motion to approve; seconded by Ms. Chhoun 7 yeas APPROVED

8. SUBCOMMITTEES

8.1. Human Resources and Labor Relations Subcommittee: Report and approval of the minutes of the Meeting of Thursday, September 29, 2022 [Connie Martin, Chairperson]

Ms. Martin, Chairperson of the Human Resources & Labor Relations Subcommittee informed the Committee that the Subcommittee met to discuss the consideration of job descriptions, contracts and staffing needs related to: Human Resources, Teaching & Learning, Equity & Community Engagement, Lowell High School, and Unaffiliated Personnel. Ms. Martin stated that a majority of the job descriptions discussed were voted on at the October 5, 2022 School Committee meeting.

Ms. Thompson made a motion to accept the report as a report of progress; seconded by Ms. Chhoun. 7 yeas APPROVED

8.2. Policy & Governance Subcommittee Meeting: Report and approval of the minutes of the Meeting of Thursday, September 29, 2022 [Jackie Doherty, Chairperson]

Ms. Doherty, Chairperson of the Policy & Governance Subcommittee informed the Committee that the Subcommittee was regarding intervention programs that are being offered in school, particularly to do with instruction. She stated that students stated that because of the Civics program they were doing



computer based work and they're struggling and not keeping up with their work as well as losing Allied Arts. She stated that there was a thought that a policy was needed, but as this time no policy will be being brought forward.

Ms. Delrossi made a motion to accept the report as a report of progress; seconded by Ms. Martin. 7 yeas APPROVED

8.3. Joint Equity & Access and Facilities & Transportation Subcommittee Meeting: Report and Approval of the Meeting of Monday, October 3, 2022 [Stacey Thompson, Chairperson and Jackie Doherty, Chairperson]

Ms. Doherty, Chairperson of the Facilities & Transportation Subcommittee informed the Committee that the discussion that took place was around if our current school assignment policy results in equitable student distribution across race, language, economic status, gender and other demographic factors. Also, if our current school assignment policy result in equitable access for all student demographics to programs and choice opportunities across our district and if our current school assignment policy perpetuates inequalities across our schools. They also discussed how we make all schools equally desirable for all students and how we shift misperceptions of some schools. The elementary school landscape and the feeder schools was discussed and a presentation included a map of the district with the zones highlighted in different colors. She stated that when many families are registering their children the questions most often asked are about the middle school feeder schools and if transportation is provided for that school. She stated that families find the two (2) mile regulation an incredible hardship. She stated that a formal RFP needs to look at enrollment for the entire city (including private schools, charter schools and home schooling).

Ms. Thompson added that there is a walkability issue in the City and Cambodia town has addressed that, but most of the city has not.

Ms. Doherty made a motion for the administration to come back to the Committee with a scope for an RFP as well as seek advice from the City Solicitor; seconded by Ms. Thompson. 7 yeas APPROVED

Ms. Delrossi made a motion to accept the report as a report of progress; seconded by Ms. Chhoun. 7 yeas APPROVED

9. REPORTS OF THE SUPERINTENDENT

Ms. Doherty made a motion to suspend the rules to allow Item. # 9.3 to be taken out of order; seconded by Ms. Thompson. 7 yeas APPROVED

9.1. October Bias Based Incident Report

Ms. Phillips, Chief Equity & Engagement Officer provided a report to the Committee provided data from September 2022. She stated that fifty-four (54) total incidents were reported, including eleven (11) incidents of racism and of these fifty-four (54) incidents, forty-two (42) investigations were completed



and uploaded into the database during this timeframe. The report stated that with the completion of the first month of school, the Equity Office staff will be following up with schools regarding incomplete investigations as well as determining average length of time for completion of investigations. Staff will also conduct additional analysis into the unsubstantiated claims of racism to determine what restorative steps are being taken to build positive school communities, relationships among peers as well as peer-staff relationships. Additional training will be identified for school staff designated as investigators of incidents relating to harassment and racism.

Mr. Lay asked if they have been substantiated or unsubstantiated and if staff is getting proper training.

Mr. Phillips stated that we need to do a better job around racial behaviors.

Ms. Martin would like to see the report collapsed into a few categories.

Ms. Thompson stated that she asked if students knew about the reporting form and she was told no. She asked what if it's an employee and that they need to know that there are restorative issues. She asked what is being done about the unsubstantiated number. She asked what type of peer mediation is being done and what does that look like.

Ms. Phillips stated that we need to look into consistency across schools.

Ms. Thompson stated that it is very important that we are doing this the right way.

Ms. Chhoun made a motion to accept the following Reports of the Superintendent 9.1 through 9.9 as reports of progress; seconded by Mr. Lay. 7 yeas APPROVED

9.2. Enrollment Report

Ms. Phillips, Chief Engagement & Equity Officer provided a report to the Committee that informed them that the district's Office of Performance Management projected a total of 14,252 students enrolled in our schools per the October 3rd snapshot. The report states that this number was an increase of 261 students from last year's 2021 October snapshot. The school enrollment number will be finalized through a verification process that will be completed on October 28, 2022, with a chance to claim duplicate students until November 4, 2022. This number will fluctuate plus or minus, based on the number of students who are also being claimed by another school district. If two (2) or more districts report the same student as being enrolled or out-placed on the same reporting date, the student will be included on the Duplicate Student Report that is posted back to the district. The Office of Performance Management will investigate each student that is listed on this report to determine the details of their enrollment. Once all districts have certified their student enrollment data, the Department of Elementary & Secondary Education (DESE) runs a final pull after the collection period has officially been closed. As of Monday, October 3rd, the total number of students in the FRC category was twenty-five (25) awaiting school assignment finalization.

Ms. Martin asked where the trend is.



Superintendent Boyd stated early learning – Kindergarten.

Ms. Chhoun made a motion to accept the following Reports of the Superintendent 9.1 through 9.9 as reports of progress; seconded by Mr. Lay. 7 yeas APPROVED

9.3. Response to Motion 03. CSO of 09/21/22 by Eileen DelRossi Regarding Student Search Policy

Mr. Delorenzo registered and spoke on this motion.

Mr. Skinner, Chief Schools Officer provided a report that stated that the district's policy on student searches is in the Lowell Public School Policy manual and is further cited in the student handbooks. The policy can be found under File: JI- Student Rights and Responsibilities and File JIH - Interrogations and Searches.

Ms. Thompson spoke about communication with parents and asked if they waited for guardians to come to school, accommodated someone with an IEP, and what preparedness was done when dogs were being used.

Ms. Doherty stated students should feel welcomed and respected.

Superintendent Boyd stated that policies around this have been looked at by the school attorneys.

Ms. Doherty made a motion to allow the speaker to speak again; seconded by Ms. Martin. 7 yeas APPROVED

Ms. Doherty asked if the Security Guards have had training around this.

Ms. Martin stated that that she believes the search is conducted by the Assistant Principals and asked for clarification.

Superintendent Boyd responded yes regarding searches being done by the Assistant Principals and also stated that if there were wrongdoings an investigation would take place.

Mayor Chau asked that the Superintendent or someone from his administration reach out to Mr. DeLorenzo to discuss his concerns and to keep the School Committee updated on this.

Ms. Chhoun made a motion to accept the following Reports of the Superintendent 9.1 through 9.9 as reports of progress; seconded by Mr. Lay. 7 yeas APPROVED

9.4. Response to Motion 05. CFO of 09/21/22 by Stacey Thompson Regarding Printers/Printing Provider

Ms. Turner, Chief Financial Officer provided a response to the motion that informed them that schools have faced many issues with copiers including broken machines and toner supply due to the impact of COVID and one (1) of two (2) factories blowing up in Japan. Due to fear of a repeat explosion, the second factory was shut down for several months. Between the factory closures, nationwide supply shortage and staffing issues, there have been repeat issues with schools having access to toner and/or



working machines. Due to some concerns being shared from teachers and principals, we researched the problem(s) and identified possible solutions. The report stated that Ms. Turner's recommendation is to continue working with the current vendor while improving on communications by involving central office and adding additional machines from a new vendor that will offer higher speed and paper capacity. She stated that the district could continue with both until the current contract expires and then go out to bid for the entire fleet of machines at that time.

Ms. Chhoun made a motion to accept the following Reports of the Superintendent 9.1 through 9.9 as reports of progress; seconded by Mr. Lay. 7 yeas APPROVED

9.5. Response to Motion 02. CSO of 09/21/22 by Eileen DelRossi Regarding the Newly Structured Administrative Positions at LHS

Mr. Skinner, Chief Schools Officer provided a report that stated this school year Lowell High School is operating under a new administrative structure involving an Assistant Principal and Student Support Specialist in each house; previously houses were overseen by just one (1) Dean. In addition, the Freshman Academy is now overseen by an Assistant Principal whereas it was previously led by a Director. The new arrangement provides the Assistant Principal to play a role in a much broader set of leadership roles than were undertaken by the Deans or the Freshman Academy Director. They can coach and provide direct instructional support to teachers.

Ms. Thompson asked who is doing the bullying reports and would like the Student Support Specialist in the reporting process.

Mr. Skinner stated that both the Assistant Principal and the Student Support Specialist should be a part of the process.

Ms. Chhoun made a motion to accept the following Reports of the Superintendent 9.1 through 9.9 as reports of progress; seconded by Mr. Lay. 7 yeas APPROVED

9.6. Response to Motion 08. COO of 07/13/22 by Jackie Doherty Regarding the Status of the LHS Construction Project

Dr. Hall, Chief Schools Officer provided a report that informed the Committee that he contacted the City and the OPM and relayed that the School Committee requested monthly updates on the status of the Lowell High School construction project. Dr. Hall included a monthly report produced by the General Contractor and the City's project manager also relayed the below updates:

- Phase 2 demolition of existing Fieldhouse and South portion of 1980's building is nearly complete.
- Phase 2 site contractor starting excavation and ground improvements next week which will be followed by foundations.
- Phase 1 Gymnasium Bleacher install will be completed this weekend 10/15.
- Phase 1 Gymnasium punch list work is nearly complete; and -Phase 1 Exterior Custodial area and access road concrete work will be complete in next few weeks with final paving by 11/15.



Ms. Doherty stated that she would like a report from the administration and it doesn't need to be a long report (it can be a one (1) page update). She would like it from the lens of the people at the high school.

Ms. Martin agreed stating she would like an on the ground report.

Superintendent Boyd stated that everyone is invited to go to the meeting.

Ms. Martin stated that issues from the students when the Committee meets with them can be put into a report and forwarded to the Building Committee.

Ms. Doherty again stated that she is looking for a report from the administration as the end user.

Ms. Chhoun made a motion to accept the following Reports of the Superintendent 9.1 through 9.9 as reports of progress; seconded by Mr. Lay. 7 yeas APPROVED

9.7. Response to Motion 03. CFO of 09/21/22 by Stacey Thompson Regarding Diversifying Contractors and Partnerships

Ms. Turner, Chief Financial Officer provided a report that stated that per the August 4th response, that based on the responses from schools, a list was included that shows the minority or women owned/led. More importantly, the district was concerned with how to diversify our contractors and partners. The district is restricted by Chapter 30b rules which dictates which vendors to choose from. She stated that on October 19, she will be in a workshop with the Attorney General's office that will help the district balance between Chapter 30b and the need to diversify.

Ms. Chhoun made a motion to accept the following Reports of the Superintendent 9.1 through 9.9 as reports of progress; seconded by Mr. Lay. 7 yeas APPROVED

9.8. Response to Motion 06. CFO of 09/21/22 by Eileen DelRossi Regarding Unpaid Invoices

Ms. Turner, Chief Academic Officer provided a report to the Committee that informed them that all invoices are processed immediately upon receipt. Due to hundreds coming in each week, the standard is that all invoices will be processed within the net thirty (30) terms. However, there are times when invoices can be lost, not sent by vendor in a timely manner or sent to the wrong contact and this results in the Accounts Payable department "not receiving" the invoices which means there will be an unpaid invoice that we are not aware of. She stated to alleviate this issue, we added a directive on the purchase orders stating that the vendor should submit invoices directly to Accounts Payable and/or any problems with non-payment. Unfortunately, even the vendors don't always follow the guidance which results in unpaid bills.

Ms. Chhoun made a motion to accept the following Reports of the Superintendent 9.1 through 9.9 as reports of progress; seconded by Mr. Lay. 7 yeas APPROVED



9.9. Personnel Report

The Personnel Report officially informs the Committee of all retirements, resignations, promotions and new hires.

Ms. Chhoun made a motion to accept the following Reports of the Superintendent 9.1 through 9.9 as reports of progress; seconded by Mr. Lay. 7 yeas APPROVED

9.10. Home Education

Superintendent Boyd recommended that the following parents/guardians be allowed to home educate their child:

Lissette Cumba

Ms. Doherty made a motion to approve; seconded by Ms. Martin. 7 yeas APPROVED

10. NEW BUSINESS

10.1. Budget Transfer

Ms. Delrossi made a motion to approve the budget transfer of \$60,000; seconded by Mr. Lay. 7 yeas

10.2. Approval of Job Description & Permission to Post: Director of Parent/Family Leadership Institute

Ms. Martin expressed concerns around the salary.

Mr. Lay stated that he believes we have enough Director's and this is not directly helping students.

Ms. Thompson made a motion to post and approve Director of Parent/Family Leadership Institute; seconded by Ms. Doherty. 5 yeas, 1 nay (Mr. Lay), 1 present (Ms. Martin) APPROVED

11. CONVENTION/CONFERENCE REQUESTS

11.1. Out of State & Overnight Travel Request: LHS Staff Members to Denver, CO

Ms. Doherty made a motion to approve the convention/conference request; seconded by Ms. Thompson. 7 yeas APPROVED

Ms. Martin took a Point of Personal Privilege and stated that she had made a motion two (2) meetings ago to have Health Department come to a School Committee meeting to discuss the Family Resource Center enrollment process. Ms. Martin stated that she will be sending an email requesting the Health Department attend a meeting to the City Manager, School Committee and Health Department.



12. ADJOURNMENT

Mr. Lay made a motion to adjourn at 8:56 p.m.; seconded by Ms. Thompson. 7 yeas APPROVED

Respectfully submitted,

**Joel D. Boyd, Ed.D., Superintendent and
Secretary to the Lowell School Committee**

JDB/mes